

Regulation of the doctoral program in Energy (EDEY)

Please note that only the French version is legally binding.

Date of entry into force: February 25th, 2025

The EDEY doctoral program Committee,

taking into account art. 3 al. 3 and 6 al. 2 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate conferred by EPFL of January 26, 1998¹ and art. 2 al. 4 ch. 3 of the Directive concerning doctoral studies at EPFL of November 21, 2005²,

decrees:

1. Field of Application

The regulation concerning the doctoral program in Energy (hereinafter: EDEY program) sets forth the rules relating to the study plan of the EDEY program as well as the candidacy exam for the formal admission to prepare for the doctoral thesis in the EDEY program of the EPFL. Furthermore, it reiterates and details the application of certain essential rules concerning the doctorate at EPFL.

2. Study Plan

- 2.1 The study plan of the EDEY program requires **12 ECTS credits** (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System).
- 2.2 At least **4 ECTS of these 12 ECTS credits** must be obtained during the first year of the doctoral studies.
- 2.3 **8 ECTS credits** may be obtained by successfully passing either Master or doctoral courses at EPFL approved by the thesis Director. For external courses, the request must be approved by the thesis Director and then the EDEY program Director according to the conditions set by the EDEY program. The equivalence of the credits is set on a case-by-case basis. A maximum of 4 ECTS credits is given per equivalence.
- 2.4 Up to **4 ECTS credits** – but not those required for the first year – can be chosen by the doctoral candidate from all EPFL doctoral course books (including transversal skills courses) without the approval of neither the program Committee nor the thesis Director (Doctoral commission decision, Cdoct 107, May 2015).

3. Candidacy Exam

- 3.1 To be formally admitted to start a doctoral thesis at EPFL, the doctoral candidate must successfully pass the candidacy exam at the end of the 1st year of doctoral studies (art. 6 and 8 al. 1 let. a of the Ordinance on the Doctorate and 8 al. 1 and 2 of the Directive concerning doctoral studies at EPFL).

¹ RS 414.133.2

² EPFL LEX 2.4.1

The candidate writes a research plan and submits it to the members of the jury a week prior to the date of the exam. The exam consists of an oral presentation of approximately thirty minutes by the candidate, followed by questions from the jury. The candidate must demonstrate the originality of the thesis subject, the objectives and methods envisaged, as well as the hypothesis and related scientific arguments, including the general context of the thesis subject, state of the art of research in the area, position of the doctoral candidate's work within the research area, plan and methodology for the research project, as well as the timeframe for its completion.

3.2 The jury of the candidacy exam is composed of:

- a President being part of the EDEY Committee
- the candidate's thesis Director and co-Director (when applicable)
- a Professor, MER or member of EPFL teaching body who is not part of the same laboratory as the candidate's thesis Director (expert 1)
- facultative: in addition, an expert internal or external to EPFL can be part of the jury (expert 2).

Upon request and with the explicit (written) agreement of the candidate, the Director of the doctoral program may authorize participation in the candidacy exam by videoconference for a single member of the jury. Videoconferencing is not allowed for the candidate.

The presence of an audience is not allowed.

3.3 After jury deliberations, the President of the jury verbally informs the candidate of the result of the candidacy exam. Possible jury recommendations are communicated in writing to the candidate. Thereafter, the candidate receives a decision from EPFL formally admitting or refusing the start of a doctoral thesis (art. 8 al. 2 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate at EPFL).

4. Annual Report

During the thesis work, the doctoral candidate has the obligation to submit an annual progress report each year, starting one year after the candidacy exam. The candidate submits a summary of the work progress, as well as a point-by-point self-evaluation. In parallel, the thesis Director (and co-Director when applicable) complete an analogous assessment of the work progress. After a joint discussion the report is cosigned by the candidate and the thesis Director (and co-Director when applicable). The candidate then also discusses the progress and wider context with the mentor and they confirm to have met in the annual report, without reporting the content of the discussion which is confidential. Finally, the program Director will add his-her signature to the report. The candidate ensures that the above process is finalized within one month (art. 10 al. 3 and al. 4 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate at the EPFL).

5. Mentoring

5.1 Within the 1st month after enrolment, the doctoral program assigns a mentor from its pool to each doctoral candidate. The candidates may change mentor with the agreement of the program Director. Request to change a mentor can be made only after at least one meeting with the assigned mentor has happened.

5.2 The mentor remains anonymous with respect to the thesis Director to ensure confidentiality (it is up to the candidate to keep this anonymity or not). The mentor offers guidance to candidates regarding academic or career choices, as well as the resolution of any difficulties met within the context of their training, in particular regarding the preparation of their thesis or cases of conflict.

5.3 The candidates can contact their mentor whenever they deem it necessary. The candidate and the mentor confer at least once a year as part of the annual report. Exchanges between candidates and their mentor should remain confidential unless both parties agree to disclose to the program Director.

5.4 It is recommended that the candidate's mentor does not participate in nor presides over the jury for either the candidacy or the oral exam.

6. Final Provisions

The present regulation shall take effect on February 25th, 2025, and replaces any prior EDEY program regulation.

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